GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:685
ANSWERED ON:21.11.2007
DEATH OF LIONS
Barad Shri Jashubhai Dhanabhai

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidents of death of lions in Gir National Forest and other Wildlife sanctuaries have increased during the year in the country as reported in 'The Times of India', dated October 20,2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry into the matter;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof;

(e) the action taken against the culprits; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to stop the increasing incidents of missing/killing of lions (big cats)?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY)

(a) & (b) As per the information received from the State Government, during the year 2007-08 (1st April 2007 to 31st October 2007), a total 29 lion death has been recorded from Gir forest and other Wildlife Sanctuaries. Out of these 29 deaths recorded, 22 died of natural causes, 01 died due to falling in open wells, 05 died due to electrocution, and 01 died due to road accident.

(c) to (e) The State Government has conducted investigation in all the cases of death of lion and four suspects have been arrested and produced before the court of law.

(f) The measures taken by Government of India to ensure the protection of lion, inter alia, include the following:

1. Lion has been included in the Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, thus according them the highest degree of protection.
2. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, with a network of five Regional and three Sub Regional Offices, has been set up to control wildlife crimes.
3. Financial support is being provided under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme − Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries, to the Government of Gujarat for the conservation and development of wildlife and its habitats including those of lions.
4. India is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) that regulates international trade in wildlife and its derivatives. In addition, the Government of Gujarat have also taken the following measures to stop the incidents of killing of lions:

1. Development of wildlife habitat to increase the population of wild animals.
2. Intensive patrolling in sensitive areas.
3. Coordination with other law enforcement agencies /Government Departments.
4. Provision for arms & ammunition, and communication facilities to field units.
5. Training to frontline staff.
6. Conducting nature awareness campaigns for the public.
7. An Advisory Committee of experts has been established on lion conservation.